

Navy Birthday Ball

10 OCT 2015

GREETINGS

- THANK YOU – HONORED TO BE HERE TONIGHT.
- THANK YOU NAVY LEAGUE, AND ESP. MR. SKIP WITUNSKI – YOUR VOICE IN SUPPORT OF THE SEA SERVICES IS SO IMPORTANT TO OUR SUCCESSES
- THANK YOU NAVY BAND
- THANK YOU CEREMONIAL GUARD
- ACKNOWLEDGE VIP'S IN CROWD: GENERAL NELLER, MR. JAENICHEN, ADM HOWARD, ADM ROGERS, ADM SWIFT, ADM CALDWELL, MCPON STEVENS.
- WOUNDED WARRIOR – YN1 THERESA BRIM – AND 19 CAREGIVERS HERE FROM BETHESDA
- AND THANKS TO ALL OF THE MANY SAILORS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILIES IN ATTENDANCE HERE TONIGHT.

LEGACY

- TODAY, WE CELEBRATE 240 YEARS OF PROUD, COMMITTED AMERICANS SERVING IN DEFENSE OF OUR COUNTRY, ON OUR HIGH-PERFORMING NAVY TEAM.
- WE ALSO ARE CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE NAVY RESERVE FORCE THIS YEAR. OUR NAVY RESERVISTS TRADE THEIR CIVILIAN CLOTHES FOR A SEABAG TO SERVE IN THE FULL SPECTRUM OF MISSIONS – FROM COMBAT TO PEACEKEEPING, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO DISASTER RELIEF. THEY ARE READY, RELEVANT, AND RESPONSIVE TO OUR NATION’S NEEDS.
- TONIGHT, THE BIRTHDAY GIVES US A CHANCE TO REFLECT ON OUR SHARED LEGACY.

READY THEN

- I’D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU A BIT ABOUT SOME LEADERS IN OUR NAVY’S HISTORY WHO HAD A FEW THINGS IN COMMON: THEY WERE *CREATIVE*, AND THEY *ASKED QUESTIONS*. IN PARTICULAR, THEY ASKED THE *RIGHT* QUESTIONS. THEY ASKED: *HOW CAN I DO THIS BETTER?* AND, *HOW CAN I USE THE THINGS THAT I HAVE DIFFERENTLY?* *HOW CAN I LEAVE THE NAVY BETTER AND STRONGER THAN I FOUND IT?*
- LET’S START WITH A YOUNG OFFICER NAMED WILLIAM SIMS - “THE GUN DOCTOR.” HE ASKED THE QUESTION: “*HOW CAN I DO THIS BETTER?*” IN SIMS’ CASE, HE CHALLENGED THE NAVY’S TIME-TESTED GUNNERY TACTICS.

- IN 1900, THESE TACTICS, ACCORDING TO COMMON KNOWLEDGE, WERE *RIGHT*, BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN IN USE SINCE THE STUNNING PERFORMANCE IN THE WAR OF 1812.
- WHILE SIMS WAS A JUNIOR OFFICER ON BOARD USS KENTUCKY, HE ESPOUSED A NEW GUNNERY METHOD THAT HE CALLED “CONTINUOUS-AIM FIRE”...IN WHICH SHIPS’ GUNS STAYED TRAINED ON A TARGET EVEN AS THE SHIP ROLLED, MAKING THEM MUCH MORE ACCURATE.
- FOR TWO YEARS, SIMS WROTE LETTERS TO THE BUREAU OF ORDNANCE, EXPLAINING HIS NEW TACTICS AND PROCEDURES, ADVOCATING THAT THEY BE ADOPTED FLEET-WIDE. HE WAS IGNORED.
- SO FINALLY, IN A FIT OF DESPERATION (AND INSUBORDINATION, AS HE LATER ADMITTED), SIMS ACTUALLY WROTE A LETTER TO PRESIDENT TEDDY ROOSEVELT IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED HIS CONCERNS AND IDEAS FOR IMPROVING NAVAL GUNNERY.
- IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO SIMS’ LETTER, THE PRESIDENT ORDERED A GUNNERY EXERCISE TO TEST HIS FLEET’S SKILL.
- 5 SHIPS FROM THE ATLANTIC FLEET EACH FIRED FOR 5 MINUTES AT A TARGET SHIP, AT A RANGE OF ABOUT A MILE. AFTER 25 MINUTES OF FIRING, 2 SHELLS HAD GONE THROUGH THE SAILS AND NOT ONE HAD STRUCK THE SHIP ITSELF.

- AFTER SEEING THIS STUNNINGLY POOR DISPLAY, PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT WROTE BACK TO SIMS AND SENT HIS CONGRATULATIONS - *YOU*, WILLIAM SIMS, ARE NOW THE NAVY'S INSPECTOR OF TARGET PRACTICE.
- BY 1910, THE FLEET HAD BEEN ENTIRELY UPGRADED TO THE NEW TECHNOLOGY. THAT SAME YEAR, INSPECTOR OF TARGET PRACTICE SIMS RAN THE SAME EXERCISE AGAIN IN A FLEET COMPETITION.
- THE WINNING GUNNER MADE 15 HITS IN 1 MINUTE AT A TARGET AT THE SAME ONE-MILE RANGE...AND HALF OF THE HITS WERE IN A BULL'S EYE 50 INCHES SQUARE.
- FROM 0 HITS IN 25 MINUTES TO 15 IN 1. A REMARKABLE IMPROVEMENT... AND IT STARTED WITH THE CREATIVITY, PASSION, AND DRIVE OF ONE YOUNG NAVAL PROFESSIONAL.
- SIMS SERVED IN THAT ROLE FOR SIX AND A HALF YEARS. DURING THAT TIME, HE WAS SUPPORTED BY BOSSES WHO KNEW HOW TO MENTOR HIM - ALLOWING HIS IDEAS TO GROW. HE FOUND PEERS WHO COULD SEE THROUGH HIS UNCONVENTIONAL PERSONALITY AND SEE THAT HE WAS THE REAL DEAL. LATER, DURING WWI, HE ROSE TO COMMAND ALL US FORCES OPERATING IN EUROPE.
- A LIFETIME OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND FIERCE SELF-ASSESSMENT PREPARED ADMIRAL SIMS TO LEAD OUR NAVY TO VICTORY AND INTO THE MODERN ERA.
- SIM AND HIS CADRE MADE SURE WE WERE *READY THEN*.

READY NOW

- IF *READY THEN* MEANT LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR MODERN GUNNERY METHODS, AND ALSO BY THE WAY, DEFINING CARRIER AVIATION AND SUBMARINE WARFARE AS WELL, WHAT DOES *READY NOW* LOOK LIKE?
- WELL, TODAY, LIKE ADMIRALS SIMS DID ALMOST 100 YEARS AGO, OUR NAVY IS ASKING THE QUESTION, “HOW CAN I USE THE THINGS THAT I HAVE IN A BETTER WAY?”
- I’M SURE MANY OF YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE CONCEPT OF DISTRIBUTED LETHALITY. IN SHORT, THE CONCEPT MEANS THAT AS WE RECONCILE THE FORCE WE HAVE, THE THREATS WE FACE, AND THE CAPABILITIES WE NEED, ULTIMATELY WE NEED TO INCREASE THE COMBAT CAPABILITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL UNIT IN OUR FLEET AND NET THEM TOGETHER IN A HIGHLY AGILE AND ADAPTIVE FORCE.
- THIS WILL DISTRIBUTE COMBAT POWER TO A GREATER NUMBER OF UNITS AND INCREASE THE RANGE OF OPTIONS FOR OUR DECISION MAKERS.
- IT’S ABOUT MAKING WHAT WE HAVE TODAY BETTER, ACROSS THE FLEET.

- FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE A HIGHLY CAPABLE WEAPON LIKE THE TOMAHAWK THAT EXISTS IN THE FLEET TODAY. THE TOMAHAWK WAS DESIGNED AS A LAND ATTACK MISSILE. BUT, THINKING CREATIVELY, OUR TEAM HAS SHOWN IN RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS THAT WITH TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TODAY, WE CAN GET THIS WEAPON TO HIT A MOVING TARGET AT SEA.
- SO, WITH A LITTLE BIT OF INVESTMENT, WE CAN DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE A WEAPON THAT IS OPERATIONAL TODAY ON 140 COMBATANTS AND SUBMARINES, AND GIVE OUR COMMANDERS MORE OPTIONS WHEN DEALING WITH POTENTIAL THREATS.
- WE ARE CHANGING THE EQUATION – TAKING EVERYTHING WE OWN AND MAKING IT MORE LETHAL – MAKING THINGS HARDER AND MORE UNCERTAIN FOR OUR POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES.
- WE ARE EMPLOYING OUR FORCES IN CREATIVE WAYS; ENHANCING ALL OF OUR POWER AT AND FROM THE SEA.
- OUR SAILORS DEPLOYED AROUND THE GLOBE THIS YEAR, DELIVERING FORWARD PRESENCE AND PROJECTING HARD AND SOFT POWER EVERY SINGLE DAY.
 - THE GEORGE H.W. BUSH CARRIER STRIKE GROUP AND THOSE THAT FOLLOWED HER PROVIDED AIR STRIKES OVER IRAQ AND SYRIA—FOR 54 DAYS, IT WAS OUR NATION'S ONLY COMBAT OPTION.

- SAILORS FROM THE LCS USS FORT WORTH, EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL MOBILE UNIT 11 AND COASTAL RIVERINE SQUADRON THREE TRAINED WITH BANGLADESHI, INDONESIAN AND SINGAPOREAN SAILORS IN EXERCISE CARAT 2015 A FEW WEEKS AGO.
- USNS COMFORT'S CREW PROVIDED MEDICAL, ENGINEERING AND VETERINARY SERVICES TO 11 CENTRAL, SOUTH AMERICAN, AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES DURING A SIX-MONTH DEPLOYMENT THIS YEAR.
- A FEW WEEKS AGO, USS CARNEY TRANSITED TO ROTA TO BECOME THE FOURTH BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SHIP FORWARD DEPLOYED TO SPAIN.
- AND UNDERPINNING ALL THIS, SUBMARINERS ON THE USS MAINE AND SSBNS LIKE HER CONDUCTED ROUTINE DETERRENCE PATROLS AROUND THE WORLD - STANDING 100% READY AS THEY HAVE SINCE 1960.
- THIS LEVEL OF OPERATIONAL READINESS IS ENABLED BY AN INCREDIBLE NAVY TEAM: OUR ACTIVE AND RESERVE SAILORS, OUR NAVY CIVILIANS, OUR NAVY FAMILIES, AND OUR SUPPORTERS IN INDUSTRY, AROUND THE NATION, AND THE WORLD!
- AND IT IS THIS TEAM THAT ENSURES WE HAVE THE MOST UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT, THE MOST EFFICIENT LOGISTICS SUPPORT, THE BEST TRAINING, AND ULTIMATELY THE STRONGEST FLEET IN THE WORLD.

- WE ARE *READY NOW*.

READY ALWAYS

- BUT, AS IN THE PAST, AN EVER-CHANGING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT DEMANDS THAT OUR FLEET ADAPT TO MEET NEW CHALLENGES.
- I THINK THAT WE HERE IN THIS ROOM, THIS GROUP OF NAVAL PROFESSIONALS AND OUR SUPPORTERS, WE CAN ALL SENSE A RE-ORIENTATION TO THE MARITIME DOMAIN.
- RISING POWERS AROUND THE WORLD ARE TURNING TO THE SEA TO IMPROVE THEIR PROSPERITY AND THEIR SECURITY.
- 90% OF TRADE TRAVELS BY SEA, AND THE SEA LANES BY WHICH IT TRAVELS ARE BECOMING MORE CONTESTED. THIS MAKES THE NAVY'S ROLE ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT.
- THIS ROLE IS MADE EVEN MORE CHALLENGING BY THE FACT THAT WE LIVE IN AN INCREASINGLY INTERCONNECTED WORLD. WE SAY IT OFTEN, BUT IT'S TRUE.
- IT'S NOT JUST THE SEAS THAT CONNECT US ANYMORE; IT'S ALSO THE VAST GLOBAL FLOW OF INFORMATION THAT BINDS US TOGETHER, AND SPEEDS UP THE RATE OF CHANGE.
- THE WORLD WILL ONLY GROW MORE COMPLEX, BUT THIS COMPLEXITY *FAVORS* OUR NATION. OUR DIVERSITY, THE QUALITY OF OUR IDEAS...THESE CHARACTERISTICS LEAVE US POISED TO COMPETE...IF WE ARE BOLD.

- WE CAN'T PREDICT THE FUTURE, BUT WE CAN DEVELOP A FORCE THAT CAN RESPOND AND ADAPT FASTER.
- IN AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE PACE OF CHANGE IS RAPIDLY INCREASING, WE MUST LEARN FASTER - SEE, DECIDE, ACT AND ASSESS – TO REACT TO AND IN FACT *PACE* THE RATE OF CHANGE AND OUTPACE ANY OF OUR ADVERSARIES CHALLENGES. WE MUST BE CREATIVE, TAKE THE INITIATIVE, AND INCREASE OUR ADVANTAGES AT SEA.
- JUST AS SIMS, AND BULL REEVES, AND MUSH MORTON, AND SO MANY OTHER INNOVATORS DEVELOPED THE FOUNDATIONS FOR PAST VICTORIES; WE MUST DEVELOP THE FOUNDATION FOR TOMORROW'S WINS. WE MUST BE *READY ALWAYS*.
- WE MUST ASK A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF OURSELVES: WHO WILL BRING US OUR NEW, DISRUPTIVE, AND CONTRARY IDEAS?
- IN ONE MODEL, WE PROTECT AND FOSTER OUR OWN INNOVATORS AND THEIR IDEAS, AND IN DOING SO KEEP OUR ENEMIES OFF BALANCE, GUESSING, REACTING, CONFUSED AND ULTIMATELY CHECKMATED.
- IN ANOTHER MODEL, WE REMAIN COMFORTABLE IN A NEST BUILT OF THOUSANDS OF BITS OF RED TAPE, CONSENSUS THINKING, BUREAUCRACY AND INERTIA? IN THIS MODEL, ALL DISRUPTIVE IDEAS ARE BROUGHT TO US BY THE ENEMY.

- ADMIRAL SIMS HIMSELF GAVE US A CHALLENGE THAT WE CAN KEEP IN OUR MINDS AS WE CLOSE THE EVENING AND RETURN TO OUR JOBS NEXT WEEK:
 - “A NAVY, TO BE SUCCESSFUL, MUST BE GUIDED NOT ONLY BY **PEOPLE** OF ABILITY, BUT BY **THOSE** OF AN INTELLECTUAL HONESTY THAT IS PROOF AGAINST PERSONAL AMBITION OR ANY OTHER INFLUENCES WHATSOEVER. WHICH OF US WILL BE QUOTED IN THE FUTURE AS EXAMPLE OF DANGEROUS CONSERVATISM?”
- A TOUGH CHALLENGE, BUT I AM EXTREMELY OPTIMISTIC - THIS IS OUR STRENGTH!

CLOSING

- IN CLOSING, WE’VE BEEN HAVING A TERRIFIC RUN OF IT FOR THE PAST 240 YEARS, AND THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT.
- THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US, THOSE WHO GAVE US THIS GREAT NAVY - THEY STAND RELIEVED. WE HAVE ASSUMED THE WATCH. IT’S ON US TO TURN OVER A GREAT NAVY TO OUR RELIEF WHEN THEIR TIME COMES.

- BUT BEFORE THAT, LET'S CENTER BACK ON THE PRESENT. WHEN YOU RETURN HOME FROM THIS WONDERFUL GATHERING OF TEAM MATES AND FAMILY, I ASK YOU TO REFLECT ON OUR SAILORS AND MARINES SERVING OVERSEAS, IN HARM'S WAY, WHO ARE TAKING THEIR TURN ON WATCH SOMEWHERE: IN A COCKPIT, ON A BRIDGE, IN CONTROL, OR ON A FORWARD OPERATING BASE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TOMORROW LOOKS LIKE, BUT I'M HOPEFUL THAT BECAUSE OF THOSE MEN AND WOMEN ON WATCH, AND THOSE IN THIS ROOM, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD UPON OUR SERVICE'S STORIED HISTORY.
- THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO OUR NAVY - AND HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

WORD COUNT: 1,775

TIME (EST.): 14 MINUTES